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## THE METHOD OF ARRIAN IN THE *ANABASIS*

BY R. B. STEELE

Arrian frankly admits in his Introduction that he drew most of his material from Aristobulus and Ptolemy, for one had served with Alexander and the other was a king. His final statement is that he had criticized some of the acts of Alexander, for the sake of truthfulness and as an aid to men; and this had been done not without the help of God. The latter part of this statement explains the frequent use of *τὸ θεῖον* and *τὸ δαίμονιον* in the *Anabasis*, for they clearly indicate the religious attitude of the author. In addition to the material from his main sources he gives other items that he deems credible. Especially in iv. 14. 4; vi. 11. 2, and vii. 3. 6 he shows that on some points there were several divergent accounts, and, because of this, it was necessary for him to express his own views frequently. For this reason the *Anabasis* is not only a record of accepted facts, but also a criticism of many phases of the current history of Alexander. To show these two elements in the work, we shall divide the discussion into two parts: I, The Historical; and II, The Critical.

### I. THE HISTORICAL

A. *Aristobulus and Ptolemy*.—Aristobulus and Ptolemy are the chief guides of Arrian, but there are no statements definitely fixing the source of most of the items which he presents. The determination of the parts derived from each might be possible if we could bring to the discussion some marked features gained from a study of the works of each outside of the *Anabasis*. But in this work is found all that is left of the work of Ptolemy. We cannot tell how much of the unassigned material may be due to him, but there are at least two items. These are in i. 11. 3, the number of the troops of Alexander, given by Plutarch, *Alexander* 16, and *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute*, Or. i. 3. 327 E; and in i. 4. 8 an incident in the Thracian campaign, given by Strabo vi. 3. 8 C 302. Curtius says of Ptolemy in ix. 5. 21: "Scilicet gloriae suae non refragatus," and on the strength of this we might be justified in assigning to him

the passages in which he is freely mentioned, but otherwise there would be no justification for so doing. Most of the short quotations from his work give the losses in battle, and are merely approximations stated with a preposition, as in i. 2. 7, ἀμφί; ii. 11. 8; iv. 25. 4, ὑπέρ; vi. 2. 4, ἐς. A wound of Alexander is described in vi. 10. 1, and in vi. 11. 8 is given Ptolemy's denial that he himself was at the battle, so that he could not have been the original source of the account. In iii. 17. 6 is a short statement concerning tribute; and in v. 28. 4 a sacrifice is mentioned.

There are a few passages of considerable length definitely assigned to Ptolemy. The first is the account in i. 8 of the capture of Thebes. Here, as also in v. 15. 2, we find *πεσεῖν* twice, and its compounds several times. But the simple verb and its compounds, especially those in ἐν-, ἐπι-, and *προς-*, as well as the associated participles *βληθείς*, *πληγείς*, and *τυπείς*, are freely used throughout the *Anabasis*, and in other passages we cannot connect the verb-forms with Ptolemy. Compare vi. 11. 7, from Ptolemy, with iv. 8. 9, from Aristobulus. Arrian says in v. 20. 8 that of the rivers of India Ptolemy gave a description of the Acesines only. This contains the words τὸ ὕδωρ κυμαίνεσθαι τε καὶ καχλάζειν, which are used again by Arrian in vi. 4. 4, in describing the juncture of the Acesines and the Hydaspes.

Here and there we find briefly stated facts assigned to Aristobulus, and these may be taken as points in his narrative not agreeing with that of Ptolemy. A single quotation will show the general character of them all: ii. 4. 7, Ἀλέξανδρος δέ . . . ὑπὸ καμάτου ἐνόσησεν. There are half a score of others of a similar character. The longer quotations are, for the most part, discussions of matters technical in their nature, and calling for a vocabulary differing from that in other parts of the narrative. The subjects are as follows: iv. 6. 1 the destruction of a part of the army; iv. 8. 9 the death of Clitus; iv. 13. 5 a Syrian prophetess; vi. 22. 4 the myrrh tree; vi. 29. 4 the tomb of Cyrus; vii. 17. 5 the entrance of Alexander into Babylon; vii. 18. 5 an account of a sacrifice; vii. 19. 3 the reception of the fleet. The first (iv. 6. 1) is most nearly like the general narrative. Here we find the two verbs διαφθαρήναι and κατακόψαι. The first is in general use, as it is found in v. 20. 9 from Ptolemy, as well as in ii. 4. 9 in what purports to be a letter from Parmenio; and in iv. 4. 9,

an Arrian section. We find *διακοπῆναι* in vi. 22. 8, an indirect statement. The compound in *κατα-* is most freely used, several times with *πρός*, and in a series of actions is followed by *ἐκόπτοντο*. There are also some statements taken from Aristobulus without acknowledgment. The following are examples: In i. 16. 4 the number of men killed at the battle of the Granicus (Plutarch, *Alexander* 16); in ii. 5. 2 the description of the statue of Sardanapalus at Anchialus (Strabo xiv. 5. 9 C 672); and in iii. 29. 3 the description of the Oxus (Strabo xi. 7. 3 C 509). These, however, like the others, do not help to fix the source of any other part of the *Anabasis*. This statement is also true of other fragments of the work of Aristobulus. The *Alexander* of Plutarch is not in all respects like his *Caesar*, but we cannot trace any of the differences to the work of Aristobulus, of which use was made in the *Alexander*. In chapter 31, *σφᾶς αὐτοῖς*, though in harmony with the usage of Arrian, and contrary to Plutarch's general form of statement, gives no evidence of the source from which it came. The personal element must also be taken into consideration, for even where Arrian and Plutarch are professedly quoting from the same source, the phrasing is often different, and the arrangement not the same. Illustrations of this can be found in *Anabasis* ii. 25. 2: *Alexander* 29; i. 16. 7:16; ii. 26. 4:25; ii. 4. 9:19.

There are a few places where Arrian mentions an item found in neither Aristobulus nor Ptolemy, and also one found in both of them: ii. 12. 5; iii. 26. 1; iv. 14. 1; and vi. 11. 5. There are two passages of considerable length in which these writers do not agree. The first is the description of the capture of Bessus, in iii. 29 ff., noticeable for the number of times the name of Ptolemy occurs. He takes to himself all the credit for the capture, although Aristobulus in chapter 30. 5 names Spitamenes and Dataphernes as the captors. Both accounts have *γυμνὸν ἐν κλοιῷ δῆσαντα*, but the words are not used elsewhere by Arrian. The account of the battle with Porus is much longer. A brief statement from Aristobulus is given in v. 14. 3-4, but Arrian is not fully satisfied with this, and gives other facts from Ptolemy. He argues that the number of chariots, sixty, given by Aristobulus is incorrect, and in chapter 14. 6 accepts the number, one hundred twenty, given by Ptolemy. Plutarch,

*Alexander* 60, twice states that his description of the battle is taken from the epistles of Alexander. In summing up the results of the first stage of the battle it is stated that four hundred were killed (*ἀνελεῖν*), the number agreeing with that given from Ptolemy in chapter 15. 2 (*πεσεῖν ἑς*). At a few points there is an evident adaptation of the same phraseology, as Arrian has in chapter 16. 3 *ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ δεξιόν*, for which Plutarch has the dative; in chapter 15. 1, from Ptolemy, *προσάγειν . . . σύν*: Plutarch *ἐπιέναι μετά*; in chapter 14. 3, from Aristobulus, and in chapter 14. 6, from Ptolemy, *ἐκ τῆς νήσου τῆς μικρᾶς περᾶσαι*: Plutarch *διαπερᾶσαι πρὸς νήσον οὐ μεγάλην*.

There are a number of short passages in which the items are, for the most part, unimportant, as in iii. 4. 5 the road back from the shrine of Ammon; and in v. 20. 2 the name of a people. However, there are three passages in which the statements referred to the two authors contain contrasted terms. These are (1) in iii. 3. 5 the bird leaders in the desert; (2) in vi. 3. 5 an incident in the Indian campaign; and (3) in iv. 14. 3 the death of Callisthenes.

1. iii. 3. 5: The contrasted terms in this are *στρατεύματος* and *στρατιᾶς*. The latter is freely used throughout the *Anabasis*, and nowhere more freely than in iii. 29. 6—30. 5, where is given the account by Ptolemy of the capture of Bessus. Arrian has the first word in iii. 18. 1 and the second in iii. 26. 3 referring to the same body of men. The use of two words is merely for rhetorical variation, as of *στρατιά* with *στρατός* in vi. 5. 5; and with *δύναμις* in iii. 8. 6 and 7.

2. iv. 3. 5: *Τὴν δὲ ἐβδόμην πόλιν ἐξ ἐφόδου ἔλαβε, Πτολεμαῖος μὲν λέγει, ὅτι αὐτοὺς σφᾶς ἐνδόντας, Ἀριστόβουλος δέ, ὅτι βία καὶ ταύτην ἐξεῖλεν καὶ ὅτι πάντας τοὺς καταληφθέντας ἐν αὐτῇ ἀπέκτεινε*. In this passage Arrian has *ἔλαβε*, and elsewhere in similar statements, but the compound in *κατα-* not only here but also, apparently quoted from Aristobulus, in vii. 19. 3; and in his own discussions in v. 7. 2 and vii. 23. 8. We find *ἀπέκτεινε* in iii. 30. 4 and iv. 5. 9, both passages probably from Ptolemy, and also quoted in iv. 8. 8 and iv. 9. 2. From this it is clear that neither word is peculiar to Aristobulus, and that the change in form is purely stylistic. Arrian rings all the changes on the forms of the reflexive pronouns, and their arrangement with verbs of giving. But while we find in iv. 19. 4 *ἐνέδοσαν*

σφᾶς αὐτοῦς, the preceding section has παραδιδόναι σφᾶς, and this verb occurs several times in quotations from Ptolemy. Evidently neither the form of the reflexive, nor of the verb of giving, is a test of the style of the writers, and this is still further indicated by the variations in vi. 8. 3.

3. iv. 14. 3: Here in successive clauses Aristobulus has τελευτῆσαι and Ptolemy ἀποθανεῖν. Both verbs are used for the sake of variation in iii. 27. 3, and while the usage of Arrian with these words is sharply contrasted with that of Diodorus, the same cannot be shown for the usage of Aristobulus and of Ptolemy.

B. *Other Writers*.—The quotations from other writers are valuable as illustrations, rather than for their historical content. In vi. 13. 5 there is assigned to Nearchus a line from Aeschylus (fr. 444 N.), spoken to Alexander by an unnamed Boeotian. There is also in vii. 16. 6 a line from Euripides (fr. 963 N.), and this too probably came from Nearchus, for he is mentioned in connection with the same incident by Diodorus xvii. 112. 4. Arrian further mentions from Nearchus in vi. 24. 4 the emulation of Cyrus and Semiramis by Alexander; in vii. 3. 6 Calanus; and in vii. 20. 9 a criticism of Onesicritus. The latter he names as an author in vi. 2. 3, but only to criticize, and Callisthenes and Chares not at all. He cites Eratosthenes and Megasthenes in v. 6. 1 for an item referring to India, but elsewhere he makes use of these writers, as well as of others, both named and unnamed, chiefly for critical purposes.

C. *The Ephemerides and Epistles*.—1. The account of the last days of Alexander is professedly taken by both Arrian and Plutarch from the Ephemerides, but the difference in the form of statement leads us to believe that one account was written with an eye to the other, and that we do not have unchanged what Aristobulus may have written.

2. The concurrent accounts of Diodorus, Arrian, and Plutarch (*Alexander*) establish the fact that some letters passed between Alexander and Darius in regard to the royal captives. Plutarch is briefer than Arrian in ii. 25, and in neither place is there any indication of the source of the information. The same is true in regard to the letters quoted by Arrian in ii. 14. The first of these is of a piece with the remainder of the narrative, but there are a few touches

in the reply of Alexander which show that Arrian retained some of the original phraseology. The prepositional usage does not altogether harmonize with that of Arrian. We find in section 7 οὐκ ἄκοντες παρ' ἐμοί εἰσιν, but there are not many other occurrences of the dative with παρά, and among them are αὐτῷ in iii. 19. 6 and βαρβάροις in iii. 23. 8, both in indirect statements of Alexander. We also find, instead of the usual σύν, μετά with the genitive; in section 5 Βαγῶν, in section 7 σοῦ (twice) and ἐμοῦ. Noticeable also are the occurrences of περί, in section 9 with σοῦ, βασιλείας, and αὐτῆς. The use of εἰς instead of ἐς is also worthy of notice. The expression in section 9, ὅταν πέμπῃς, may not be from Alexander, but nowhere else is there such a massing of prepositions unusual for Arrian.

## II. THE CRITICAL

A. *Clitarchus*.—Arrian does not mention Clitarchus, whose narrative he sought to modify or supplant, and it is toward him that many of the silences and criticisms in the *Anabasis* are directed. Some of the highly colored accounts found elsewhere (it is assumed that they originated with him) are omitted altogether by Arrian. Among these are the description of the mutilated soldiers (800 in Diodorus xvii. 69. 3; 4000 in Curtius v. 5. 5); the vengeance wreaked on the Branchidae (Curtius vii. 5. 28–35); the story of Dioxippus (Diodorus xvii. 100–101; Curtius ix. 7. 16–26); and the wounding and cure of Ptolemy (Diodorus xvii. 103. 8; Curtius ix. 8. 22). He incidentally speaks of the Amazons in iv. 15. 4; and in vii. 13. 2 states that Atropates presented to Alexander a hundred female warriors, declaring they were Amazons. This gave an opportunity to discuss the existence of the race, and in doing this he cites Xenophon and Herodotus, and states that neither Aristobulus nor Ptolemy speaks of them in connection with Alexander. Diodorus in xvii. 52 describes the greatness of Alexandria, and Arrian in iii. 2. 2 states that grain was used to mark out its site. Plutarch, *Alexander* 26, gives the marvelous addition that birds of all sizes and descriptions came from the clouds and devoured the grain. Similar to this is the treatment of the story about the eunuch attendant on the captive Persian women. He is said to have escaped, and to have carried some information to Darius. Arrian in iv. 20. 1 expressly says it was a little

after the battle of Issus, and that when Darius learned that his wife was alive and well he uttered a prayer, closing with the plea that Alexander might be king, if he himself could be no longer king of Asia. Plutarch, *Alexander* 30, places this episode just before the battle of Arbela. This enables him to introduce some touches that would be out of place in the narrative of Arrian. And for the entire story he claims that there is good authority.

The account of the destruction of Persepolis is another good illustration of the method of Arrian. He simply states in iii. 18. 11 that Alexander burned the palace in Pasargada, though Parmenio counseled saving it. He does not mention Thais, and ends the paragraph by saying, "Alexander does not seem to me to have done this with sense." Later, in vii. 1. 1, he mentions the return of Alexander to Pasargada and Persepolis, and in vi. 30. 1 to the palace. The story as told by Curtius in v. 7 is a glowing one, though some of the striking details are from Livy, and a part of the conclusion is from Vergil's *Aeneid*. The work is represented as being thoroughly done (section 9): "ac ne tam longa quidem aetate, quae excidium eius secuta est resurrexit. alias urbes habuere Macedonum reges, nunc habent Parthi. huius vestigium non inveniretur, nisi Araxes amnis ostenderet. haud procul moenibus fluxerat: inde urbem fuisse XX stadiis distantem credunt magis quam sciunt accolae." This however may be an adaptation from Livy; see Florus i. 16. 8. Pliny in N.H. vi. 26. 115, "Persepolim caput regni dirutam ab Alexandro," seems to concur with Curtius, though the city still existed in the days of Ammianus Marcellinus, as is shown by xxiii. 6. 42: "Persepolis est clara."

The reason for the highly decorated story of the passage of Alexander through Carmania is given by Curtius in ix. 10. 24: "aemulatus Patris Liberi non gloriam . . . sed etiam famam . . . statuit imitari, animo super humanum fastigium elato." Arrian mentions the existence of the story, but in vi. 28. 1 and 2 he pronounces it untrustworthy.

B. *The Logos*.—The term λόγος is freely used by Arrian to indicate the source of items lying outside of the work of Aristobulus and Ptolemy, some of which must have been in the work of Clitarchus. The ravens leading the army of Alexander on its march to the shrine



of Ammon are mentioned in iii. 3. 6 on the authority of Aristobulus and of the usual report (ὁ πλείων λόγος) and this agrees with Diodorus xvii. 49. 5. The story (iii. 2. 1) of the founding of Alexandria is also from the logos, and this, so far as it goes, agrees with Plutarch's account. Yet all that is given under λόγος cannot be referred to Clitarchus, for in iv. 12. 3 is stated a piece of information which, in Plutarch, *Alexander* 54, is assigned to Chares, and the verbal resemblances show that Arrian and Plutarch are giving adaptations of the same account. This is also true of what Arrian in vii. 18. 6 and Plutarch, *Alexander* 69, say about Calanus meeting Alexander in Babylon. In vii. 18. 1 there is mentioned a logos written by Aristobulus, while forms of λέγω occur with λόγος in i. 26. 4, vi. 28. 2, and vii. 22. 1. However, some form of ἔχω is generally used, though in i. 16. 3 there is only ὡς λόγος.

C. *Verbs of Saying and Writing.*—These verbs are used to introduce an extensive indefinite element in the *Anabasis*. Some of the items to which reference is made were evidently in Clitarchus, as can be seen by comparing the following passages from Arrian and Diodorus: i. 11. 7: xvii. 17. 2; ii. 12. 3: xvii. 37. 5; as also vi. 11. 8: Curtius ix. 5. 21; vii. 14. 7: Plutarch, *Alexander* 72.

These indefinite statements are usually in contrast with a definite one, generally of his main sources, as in ii. 12. 5; iv. 14. 1; ii. 3. 7; iv. 13. 5; and in vii. 3. 1 Arrian himself and Nearchus. The most noticeable section of all is vii. 14, where, through a long chapter, ἄλλοι, οἱ μὲν, and most frequently οἱ δέ, reveal something of the extent to which Greek writers interested themselves in the comradeship of Alexander and Hephaestion.

D. *Arrian's Comments.*—That Arrian was a free editor is shown by the dozen short passages in which he has expressed his attitude toward his authorities and his subject. He says in v. 14. 4 and vi. 2. 4 that he prefers Ptolemy to Aristobulus, and not infrequently names both. He has half a dozen negative statements similar to ii. 3. 8, οὐκ ἔχω ισχυρίσασθαι; and the same verbs in an affirmation of something divine helping Alexander on his march through the desert to the shrine of Ammon. He gives a sketch of himself in i. 12. 5, and in iv. 14. 4 calls attention to the fact that he had placed together the description of two events that were not immediately

connected. He diverges from his subject in iii. 5. 7 to commend the Roman government of Egypt, and in iii. 16. 8 to call attention to the statues of Harmodius and Aristogiton at Athens. The characterization of Darius in iii. 22. 2-6 is more closely connected with his subject.

The most important of the Arrian sections are those in which judgment is passed on the character of Alexander. His love of glory is mentioned in vi. 13. 4, and his high ambition in vii. 1. 4. But of far more importance than these are the final chapters of the *Anabasis* giving a characterization, and a discussion of criticisms passed on him. In addition to these three sections, there are others, usually short, scattered through the work, either praising or condemning some specific action. In ii. 24. 6 mention is made of an epigram not worthy of record, and so it is not given. Among other long sections are v. 7. 1-8. 1 discussing the method of bridging the Indus; ii. 16. 1-6; and iv. 28. 2 his views about Herakles. There are shorter sketches of Anaxarchus in iv. 9. 8; of Callisthenes in iv. 12. 6-7; and of Clitus in iv. 9. 1.

These passages indicate that Arrian was well aware of the difficulties involved in the history of Alexander, and that, for some of them, there was no solution. They also show that he went outside of the Alexander historians for material to illustrate his narrative. At the same time, so we may infer, most of his criticisms were called forth by the character of the work of Clitarchus, just as they were by statements of Strabo; see *Class. Phil.* XIII, 306. The latter furnished him with critical suggestions; the former with subjects to be criticized. As Aristobulus is the latest of the early cycle of Alexander historians, the question has been raised whether Arrian drew his criticisms from him.

Fränkel in *Die Quellen der Alexanderhistoriker*, p. 75, concludes that both Arrian and Plutarch found in the work of Aristobulus the indefinite expressions *οἱ μὲν λέγουσι*, etc. This indefiniteness, suitable for a writer in the position of Arrian, does not harmonize with the assurance which we conceive belonged to the original observers of incidents in the campaigns of Alexander. In ii. 3. 7 and iv. 13. 5 the indefinite "they say" is put in opposition to the statement of Aristobulus, and in iv. 14. 1 to his and Ptolemy's. In ii. 12. 5 the

account of both of these is opposed to the logos. But in addition to this indefinite element there are four passages which indicate the critical activity of Arrian independent of Aristobulus. Two of these (vi. 2. 3 and vii. 13. 2) were suggested by Strabo (xv. 1. 33 C 701 and xi. 5. 4 C 505), who made both statements independently of Aristobulus.

Arrian has in vi. 11 a discussion of the wounding of Alexander among the Malli. One item mentioned is that some said that Critodemus, others that Perdiccas, acted as surgeon on the occasion. Some also have written (vi. 11. 8) that Ptolemy was present on that occasion, but this Arrian denies on the authority of Ptolemy himself, and in addition (chapter 11. 2) has an original polemic against liars, with special reference to a report that would continue if not put to rest by his own work. Curtius in ix. 5. 25 names Critobulus, and in section 21 states that the story about Ptolemy was given by Clitarchus and Timagenes. Not Ptolemy, but Limnaeus and Peucestes are named as the defenders of Alexander by Plutarch, *Alexander* 63; but in *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute*, Or. i. 2. 327 B, he names Ptolemy and Limnaeus, and in Or. ii. 13. 342 D associates the Leonnati with the plural of these names. Arrian's criticism seems directed at both Clitarchus and Plutarch. In the same connection, in opposition to the current logos, he asserts that the fight was among the Malli, and this statement may be directed against Plutarch, *De Fort.* ii. 13. 343 E, where the Oxydracae (Sudracae Curt ix. 4. 15) are mentioned, though it is the Malli in 327 B and 341 C; *Alexander* 63; and Strabo xv. 1. 33 C 701. Another statement, also correcting the logos, refers to Arbela, and this is in accord with Strabo and Plutarch.

Arrian begins vii. 27 with the statement that he knew many other things had been written about the death of Alexander, and then he mentions the story of the poison given by Iollas with Medius as his helper. This is suggested by Diod. xvii. 117. 5—118. 2, who speaks of the poisoning plot, adding that, immediately after the death of Alexander, it had been suppressed through fear of Antipater and Cassander. Curtius in x. 10. 14—19 follows Diodorus, and Plutarch, *Alexander* 77, has the same story. But Arrian adds to this the statement that someone had not been ashamed to write that Alexander, realizing he was doomed to die, threw himself into

the Euphrates, and Roxana was aware of the fact. Arrian says he gives these facts so as to have it known that he was aware of them, rather than that he believed them true. This remark must be taken as referring to the last item, for the poison story was too widely known to call for any comment, nor would there have been need of any if the last item had been given by Aristobulus.

Considered as a historical work the *Anabasis* is comparative rather than critical. By the side of facts gathered from Aristobulus and Ptolemy, whose trustworthiness was attested by their positions, Arrian placed facts garnered from other authors, against none of whom, save only Onesicritus, dared he bring a railing accusation. He lessens the weight of many items by referring them to indefinite authorities, but usually when his authorities disagree he cannot decide which is correct. The style is uniform throughout, and is of a piece with that in Arrian's minor works. Even the parts definitely referred to his sources, either definite or indefinite, in no way differ from the portions containing his own discussions.

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